

Message Text

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ACTION EB-07

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 EA-07 NEA-10 ISO-00 CAB-02 CIAE-00
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FM AMCONSUL HONG KONG
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3408
INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
AMEMBASSY CANBERRA
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMCONSUL MONTREAL
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE
AMEMBASSY TOKYO
AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

C O N F I D E N T I A L HONG KONG 00563

MONTREAL PLEASE PASS USMISSION

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: EAIR HK LA VN

SUBJECT: HONG KONG CIVIL AVIATION DEPARTMENT CONSIDERS
AIR TRAFFIC SERVICES FEE

1. THE SOUTH CHINA MOURNING POST RECENTLY REPORTED THAT THE
CIVIL AVIATION DEPARTMENT (CAD) MAY BEGIN TO CHARGE AIR
TRAFFIC SERVICE FEE FOR FLYING THROUGH THE HONG KONG FLIGHT
INFORMATION REGION (FIR).

2. CAD OFFICIALS HAVE CONFIRMED THE REPORT, BUT EMPHAISZE
THAT THE PROPOSAL IS ONLY UNDER DISCUSSION. IT WILL BE
AT LEAST SIX MONTHS, AND PERHAPS AS LONG AS ONE YEAR
BEFORE ACTION, IF ANY, IS TAKEN. OFFICIALS STRESSED
THE POSSIBILITY THAT NO ACTION WILL BE TAKEN. A FINAL
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DECISION WILL NOT BE MADE UNTIL A SURVEY OF CIVILIAN
CARRIES IS CONDUSTED, TARIFF SCHEDULES ANC OLLECTION
PROCEDURES ESTABLISHED, AND THE MATTER DISCUSSED WITH ICAO.

3. THE PRECIPITATING CAUSE FOR THE DISCUSSIONS IS SAID
TO BE THE MUSHROOMING INTREST AMONG SOUTHEAST ASIAN
NATIONS TO REAP LARGE PROFITS IN VIEW OF THE ACTIONS OF

LAOS AND VIETNAM. HKG OFFICIALS STRONGLY DENY THAT THEY ARE LOOKING FOR PROFITS. CAD EMPHASIZES INSTEAD THE RISING COST OF PROVIDING AIR TRAFFIC SERVICES AND THE LARGE NUMBER OF AIRCRAFT WHICH PASS BETWEEN NORTH AND SOUTH EAST ASIA AS THE COMPELLING FACTORS. THESE AIRCRAFT PASS THROUGH THE FIR BUT DO NOT LAND IN HONG KONG. CAD CONTENTS THAT MANY OF THE NATIONS CONTEMPLATING OVER-FLIGHT FEES PROVIDE NEGLIGIBLE AIR TRAFFIC SERVICES, AND SELDON HAVE TO DEAL WITH AIRCRAFT PASSING THROUGH THEIR FIR WITHOUT LANDING.

4. THE CAD STANCE CONCERNING OVERFLIGHTS CHARGES IS NOT YET FIRM. AT THIS TIME, THE CAD SEEMS REFLUTANT TO GET INVOLVED AND SEES FAR MORE PROBLEMS THAN ADVANTAGES. THE CAD IS OPPOSED IN PRINCIPLE TO THE ASSESSMENT OF OVERFLIGHTS CHARGES. THEY HAVE FREQUENTLY CRITICIZED THE LAO AND VIETNAMESE OVERFLIGHT ASSESSMENT SCHEMES. THERE IS AN ATTITUDE, HOWEVER, THAT IT WOULD BE FOOLISH FOR HONG KONG TO REMAIN ONE OF THE FEW NATIONS IN THE REGION NOT CHARGING AIR TRAFFIC SERVICE FEES WHILE ITS LOCATION IS A NEXUS OF AIR TRAFFIC IN ASIA THAT COMPELS IT TO PROVIDE SUBSTANTIAL AIR TRAFFIC SERVICES. IT IS OUR OPINION THAT HKG WOULD NOT IMPLEMENT A PLAN FOR ASSESSING AN AIR TRAFFIC SERVICE CHARGE IF OTHER ASIAN NATIONS DROPPED THEIR SCHEME FOR CHARGING OVERFLIGHT FEES, PARTICULARLY WITHOUT COMMENSURATE AIR TRAFFIC SERVICES.

5. THIS INFORMATION EXTRACTED FROM DLO HK IR 6 842 0025 77.
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